

# The Revolutionary Age

A Chronicle and Interpretation of International Events

Vol. I, No. 34

Saturday, June 7, 1919

Price 3 Cents

## The Crisis and the Workers

THE world is in crisis. The old society is being shaken to its foundations, proving itself utterly incapable of realizing peace and happiness for the masses of the people. The system of Capitalism, with its oppression of the poor by the rich, its despotic control of industry and its enslavement of the workers, is offering the final inescapable proof of its utter incompetence. It is necessary that the proletariat, through revolutionary Socialism, should complete the downfall of Capitalism and organize a new society of peace and plenty for all.

I

The workers of the United States are in a crisis—a developing industrial crisis that threatens the peace and happiness of our people.

Unemployment is becoming a real danger. The army of the unemployed (which is always large under Capitalism) is being increased by the demobilization of the soldiers and by the "reorganization" of war industry to a peace basis.

The steady employment during the war was due to three causes: 1) the mobilization of 3,000,000 men for the army and navy, developing a comparative scarcity of workers; 2) the unprecedented orders for munitions placed by the United States government and by the governments of the Allies; and 3) the fact that the larger nations were actively producing death instead of the means of life, allowing the United States to practically usurp a monopoly of the markets of the world. Our capitalists fully exploited this unusual opportunity; they made more than \$5,000,000,000 profits out of the war: what have the workers to show?

But now that the war is ended (except the "small war" against the workers and peasants of Soviet Russia—your comrades) 3,000,000 men demobilized from the armed forces of the nation must again be absorbed in industry. This is in itself an enormous problem. But this problem is complicated by the fact that the United States is no longer able to monopolize the world's markets, the other nations again resuming production and again competing with American manufacturers. These circumstances produce an industrial crisis in two ways: 1) by displacing workers with demobilized soldiers, and 2) by lessening the world demand upon American production.

The employed are potentially unemployed. Those workers "assured of steady employment" are having wages reduced or threatened with reduction, the employers using the bludgeon of unemployment to compel submission.

The cost of living, instead of declining with the coming of peace, as was promised, is actually soaring again; and this makes the crisis all the more acute.

The workers, actually or potentially in this crisis, have answered by means of large strikes. The answer of the employers has been—terrorism: terrorism against strikers and their representatives, the threat and actual use of armed force. This terrorism indicates the tactics Capitalism will use as the crisis develops—crush the workers!

The prospect, accordingly, is a prospect of unemployment, of lower wages, of more intense toil, of a higher cost of living, and of terrorism against the workers should they actually move to alter these terrible conditions of misery and oppression.

Capitalism promised a new world from the war. Instead of a new world, Capitalism offers—a new terror and a new oppression!

II

This crisis and these developments are much more acute in other nations, directly traceable to the war and the economic forces that produced the war.

The ordinary "peaceful" competition for the economic, territorial and financial division of the world developed to a point where military force alone could decide the issue. Imperialism—the financial domination of the world, the struggle for monopolistic control of the investment markets of the world and undeveloped territory—determined the war, and Imperialism determines the peace. The Peace Conference in Paris is dividing the world territorially, economically and financially among the Five Great Powers.

The League of Nations—a league against the nations

### Declaration on Problems of the Proletariat and Revolutionary Socialism

of an imperialistic nation comes to depend upon the misery and exploitation of these "undeveloped" peoples. Upon this parasitic foundation depends the "prosperity" of modern Capitalism. But these colonial peoples are already in revolt; and their general revolt will topple over the prosperity of the "great" nations.

The unity of the revolt of the colonial peoples and

### The Left Wing Conquers

The Left Wing, as shown in partial election returns, has swept the Socialist Party. Early returns indicate a complete victory for revolutionary Socialism, the conquest of the Party for the Communist International.

The official vote on international delegates from 11 states—Georgia, Virginia, Tennessee, Florida, Rhode Island, Maine, Kentucky, Arkansas, Minnesota, Michigan and Massachusetts, gives the following results:

John Reed, 7679; Louis C. Fraina, 7077; A. Wagenknecht, 5423; C. Ruthenberg, 4523; I. E. Ferguson, 2538. These, the candidates receiving the highest vote, are all Left Wing candidates. The moderates of the Right Wing received these votes: Victor Berger, 1139; Adolph Germer, 908; Seymour Stedman, 789; James O'Neal, 778; A. Shiplacoff, 663; Algernon Lee, 565; John M. Work, 457.

In the eleven states, Kate Richards O'Hare has overwhelmingly beaten Morris Hillquit for International Secretary. Incomplete reports from other states indicate that the Left Wing has secured a substantial majority in all state organizations. This is the election that the moderates of the N. E. C. are trying to steal.

In the District 1 elections for National Executive Committee, returns from Maine, Rhode Island and Massachusetts give these results: Louis C. Fraina, 3130; Nicholas I. Hourwich, 2544; E. Lindgren, 1472; Ludwig Lore, 940; Morris Hillquit, 838; James O'Neal, 688; A. Shiplacoff, 319.

### Rush Your Seconds

Resolved, by the Joint Meeting of the branches of Local Cuyahoga County, (Cleveland), having an average of 1821 members in good standing for the year 1918, that we initiate the following referendum motions, to be submitted to the party membership of the United States:

Resolved, that the act of the National Executive Committee in expelling from the Socialist Party of Michigan from the Socialist Party of the United States, a state with 6000 members, without giving the state a trial or even a hearing in its own defense, is hereby rescinded and annulled and the Socialist Party of Michigan restored to all the rights and privileges of membership in the Socialist Party of the United States.

Resolved, that the action of the National Executive Committee of the Party in arbitrarily suspending the Russian, Ukrainian, Lithuanian, Lettish, Polish, South Slavic and Hungarian Federations from the Party is hereby rescinded and annulled.

Resolved, that the action of the majority of the National Executive Committee, which is largely composed of candidates for re-election in the referendum just closed, in holding up and refusing to tabulate the vote on Referendum B and C, for the election of the National Executive Committee, International Delegates and International Secretary, and calling a National Convention, is hereby rescinded and the national secretary instructed to immediately tabulate the vote and to declare the candidates receiving the highest number of votes elected, in accordance with the National Party Constitution.

Resolved, that the action of the National Executive Committee in preparing to place the property of the Socialist Party in the hands of a Board of Directors, three to be elected for three years, three for six years and three for nine years; these directors not being subject to recall by either the National Executive Committee or the membership of the party be reversed and rescinded.

the revolt of the proletariat means the end of Capitalism and Imperialism and the coming of world Socialism.

The break down of Capitalism provides the opportunity for the revolt. The war was an admission by Capitalism that it could not solve its economic antagonisms. The war has broken down the industrial system of Europe. The problems of reconstruction and the payment of war debts present an issue that can be solved only by the proletariat either becoming slaves, or overthrowing Capitalism and establishing Socialism. The governments are bankrupt; they are

adrift on the tides of crisis, and they cannot actually solve the enormous problems that press down upon them. The crisis will drag along, but Socialism is inevitable, since Socialism alone can reconstruct society, realize work, peace and happiness for the workers of the world.

III

Reconstruction is the order of the day—in words. The old system has clearly shown its evils to the masses. The workers have been lured to expect great things of reconstruction from the promises made during the war. But these promises are not being realized. Nor are they realized under Capitalism where the profits of the capitalists are more important than the peace and happiness of the masses.

American Capitalism is utterly incompetent on the problems of reconstruction as they concern the masses. Congress is bankrupt. It dodges every real issue. Congress is the organ of Capitalism and must act to promote the interests of Capitalism.

Reconstruction, accordingly, proceeds on the basis of promoting Capitalism, which controls our life. Industry has concentrated to the point where it dominates the whole of society, where a group of industrial concerns and bankers control industry.

But this concentration of industry provides the basis for the socialization of industry—control and management of industry, of the shops, mills and mines, by the workers through their own organizations—industrial democracy.

This does not mean state control or ownership of industry. The capitalist state is the organ of the capitalists, to protect the interests of the capitalists and crush the workers. State control of industry means capitalist control of industry, control of the workers by the capitalists and their state. Industrial democracy is realizable only by breaking the power of the capitalist state and of the capitalists, ending profits and placing all industry under the control of the workers.

IV

All these problems are determined by the class struggle that rages in capitalist society where a few capitalists own the industries on which depends the life and happiness of the many. Every act of the state, in war and peace, is determined by the class struggle: to promote the supremacy of the capitalist class, against the working class.

This class struggle comes from the fact that the workers, the majority of the people, are denied all control of industry, are an expropriated class. The purpose of the class struggle of the proletariat is to secure control of industry for the workers.

In the shops, mills and mines are the workers exploited. They are exploited by not securing the full social value of their labor, by being compelled to work for the profit of the capitalist. This exploitation develops the class struggle, the purpose of which is to socialize industry for the proletariat. This socialization of industry requires the conquest of the power of the state for its realization,—the construction of a new workers' state, or government, which will proceed to socialize industry.

Political democracy is of slight value to the workers. There can be no democracy without industrial democracy—the industrial vote by means of which the workers shall absolutely direct industry for the peace and happiness of the workers.

Revolutionary Socialism proposes a new government, that shall be industrial in character and functions. This government, elected directly by the workers in the factory and the farmers in the village, shall be the directing source of industrial management, depriving the capitalists of power, using industry exclusively for life and not for profit. This is the object—political mass action and proletarian dictatorship the means.

and the liberty of the world—is to guarantee the conquests of the Allies and maintain the supremacy of their Imperialism. There can be no peace as long as Imperialism—the cause of modern war—is not crushed by the revolutionary working class.

Imperialism, in one aspect, means, the subjugation and oppression of colonial peoples—the "prosperity"



# The Revolutionary Age

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By LOCAL BOSTON, SOCIALIST PARTY

H. G. STEINER, *Business Manager*  
885 Washington St., Boston, Mass.

Subscription \$1.00 for six months (26 issues)  
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## Still They Investigate!

THE Senate Agricultural Committee is to institute a "sweeping" investigation into the high cost of living. Congress seems to have become investigators of conditions it cannot control. It investigates the war, it tries to investigate the President, it investigates Bolshevism,—impotence in the face of forces beyond control by a parliamentary body. Investigations are for the purpose either of playing politics or of deceiving the masses. The cost of living is rising because of fundamental economic laws of Capitalism; Bolshevism is becoming ascendant because the workers must organize and struggle to end Capitalism. The collapse of Capitalism cannot be investigated away; the will of the proletariat to conquer power cannot be crushed by investigations. Let them investigate! We shall organize and direct the hosts of the proletariat in the revolutionary struggle against Capitalism.

## Recognizing Reaction

THE Allies, it is reported, are preparing to recognize the "government" of Admiral Kolchak; and Woodrow Wilson, finicky as usual when he is preparing to put something over, is reported willing to recognize Kolchak providing guarantees are given concerning the calling of a Constituent Assembly.

This recognition, should it materialize, will be simply a diplomatic avowal of an actual fact. The Allies have already recognized the Kolchak dictatorship, by loaning it money, providing it with the guns and the bullets to murder the workers and peasant of the Soviet Republic.

Kolchak represents the worst elements of the old regime. He is a Czarist official, and under him the old bureaucracy would come to power again. His government is a brutal, murderous dictatorship against the workers and peasants of Siberia. This is the government that the Allies are to recognize—the Allies who have spoken so gloriously about democracy and the self-determination of peoples.

But after all, is this prospective recognition not just?—reaction recognizing reaction!

## Provoking a Crisis

THAT small clique of the conscious bourgeois, which is directing the campaign against Bolshevism and Socialism, has apparently scored another coup. The recent bomb explosions, directed at men active in the campaign against the revolution, is being used to the limit to provoke a crisis.

The policy of this clique is clear. It is, by hook or by crook, to provoke a crisis providing the government with a convenient pretext to crush the militant proletariat by means of blood and iron.

The master class is apprehensive—and justly. An economic crisis approaches, is here. The workers are awakening; new and larger, more militant strikes approaching a revolutionary character, are being accepted by the workers. In spite of the millions spent on the "educational" campaign against Bolshevism, the American workers' sympathy for the Bolsheviks steadily grows—the ideal of the Bolsheviks, *workers' control of industry, industrial democracy*, being accepted by large masses of our workers. This bodes ill for the master class in the days to come; so it decides to crush this movement *now* by provoking a premature crisis.

This plot is conscious. There was the "powder-puff" bomb business prior to May Day, which excited people against the Socialist demonstrations on May Day; there was the "plot" in New York to seize the government and a similar "plot" in Chicago,—all of which was a fizzle. Then the press and prominent individual gangsters of the bourgeoisie, such as Mayor Ole Hanson, inciting to murder and riot against the Socialists.

The militant proletariat depends upon mass action to accomplish its purposes,—not upon acts of individual violence. The use of individual violence is char-

acteristically petty bourgeois; it is significant that the party of the terrorists in Russia, the Social-Revolutionists, developed into a counter-revolutionary force against the Soviet Republic; while the Bolsheviks, who had always opposed individual violence, are the heart and soul of the proletarian revolution.

A premature crisis is the purpose of the master class, in order to crush the militant workers. We shall not fall into their trap; we shall not play their game.

Neither shall the campaign of terrorism frighten us or make us cease our propaganda. On with the struggle against Capitalism!

## The Militant Strike

THE general strike in Winnipeg is sweeping Canada. Toronto is becoming as much of a storm centre as Winnipeg itself. The significance of this great general strike is not in its demands, which are moderate, but in the fact that it is a general strike, adopting militant means of imposing the will of the workers upon the capitalists and the capitalist state.

The militant strike ends the old passive strikes, and imposes the rule of the Strike Committee in a municipality. This is the case in Winnipeg. The Vancouver, B. C. *Sun* says:

Winnipeg today is virtually a lost city, with her telegraph wires silent, her telephone system out of commission and her postal service completely disrupted as the result of the strike. The city is practically cut off from communication with the rest of Canada and the outside world.

The central strikers' committee has practically commandeered the telegraph office and only messages pertaining to deaths, the arrival of troop trains and government business are allowed to be transmitted.

The local newspapers were forced to suspend publication on Friday and there seems to be no possibility of the papers appearing on the streets until the strike is settled. The web pressmen and the stereotypers were among the first to leave their jobs.

The banks have already closed their doors, claiming that with the telegraph and mail service disrupted they are unable to do any business.

So acute has the bread and milk problem become that the strike committee has allowed several of the bakeries to resume only upon the latter agreeing to operate under the jurisdiction of the strikers. . . . An indignant manager refused and he was told that if he did not accede his bakery would be taken over by the strike committee and operated by the strikers.

The government of Canada is impotent. The parliament talks, while the strikers act. The Montreal *Daily Star* laments this government impotence:

Existing conditions in Winnipeg and other Western cities, by whatever causes produced, are a challenge to the authority of government in Canada. No state can be subject to any self-constituted organization. No group of capitalists or workers can be permitted to assume the functions of government and impose their authority upon other classes and interests. If they could do so, "the resources of civilization would be exhausted" and we would have revolution. . . . A government which submits to such domination abdicates its functions and evades its responsibilities.

This conception of the state as neither of the workers nor the capitalists, but as something impartial, is a petty bourgeois fairy tale. It is precisely the purpose of the militant strike to impose its will upon the state, which is the state of the capitalists.

The general strike in Canada is not now a revolution,—whatever may happen in the days to come. The demands are for a forty-four hour week, "recognition" of the union, the right of "collective bargaining" and the "reinstatement of idle members,"—surely moderate demands.

But the strike is revolutionary in its method. And the method is important. The revolutionary Socialist does not yield up the struggle for the betterment of the workers, but uses means that develop the mass action and the mass power of the proletariat. The militant strike is a school of revolutionary practice, developing the action and class consciousness of the proletariat, a preliminary form of the final political strike that will overthrow Capitalism.

In this is the significance of the general strike in Canada. It is a strike that is general, that is showing the workers their power, proving that the power of the state persists only as long as the proletariat allows it to persist. The mass strike is the means for the immediate struggle against Capitalism and the final means for the Social Revolution.

The most encouraging feature of recent labor struggles is the fact of the strike broadening its character, becoming not only a general strike, but a strike in which the workers consciously try to usurp the functions of government,—in England, in Ireland, in Seattle and Butte, and now in Canada. This impulse by the proletarian masses must be clarified and directed by revolutionary Socialism into a conscious struggle for the conquest of power.

Working class power manifests itself through the political mass strike, the force of which can coerce the capitalist state, and finally develop the force to end the militant workers,—mass action to accomplish proletarian dictatorship.

In the actual mass struggle of the proletariat is the force which revolutionary Socialism must organize and direct,—upon this basis we must build.

## Clear the Decks!

II

IN his article in the New York *Call* of May 21—"The Socialist Task and Outlook," Morris Hillquit laid down the policy of the moderates concerning the controversy in the Socialist Party: "It would be futile to preach reconciliation and union where antagonism runs so high. Let the comrades on both sides do the next best thing. Let them separate, honestly, freely in its own way, and make such contribution to the Socialist movement in America as it can. Better a hundred times to have two numerically small Socialist organizations, each homogeneous and harmonious within itself, than to have one big party rent by dissensions and squabbles, an impotent colossus on feet of clay. The time for action is near. Let us clear the decks."

Just before the N. E. C. convened, there was a conference of the moderates at Saranac Lake, where Hillquit now is. . . . While Hillquit was not present at its sessions, the N. E. C. carried out his policy. It split the party; it tried to compel the revolutionary Socialists to get out and form a new party, while the moderates retain control of the Socialist Party. This they did, ruthlessly, venomously, infamously, all the while aware that the Left Wing was the majority in the Party.

Abraham Shiplacoff, the moderates' master of camouflaged sincerity, said to the editor of *The Revolutionary Age*, who was in Chicago observing the moderates' burlesque coup d'état: "If you are honest, you must admit that it is better to have two small parties, each united, than one large party split by factions."

"The Left Wing is willing to accept your challenge, Shiplacoff," came the quick answer. "Count the referendum votes, make them public, and decide who is majority and minority. If we are in the minority, we'll get out and form a new party; if you are a minority, you get out and either form a new party or join the Labor Party."

But Shiplacoff's answer was a refusal, making it clear that his purpose is to retain control of the party machinery for the moderates, no matter how much of a minority they are. . . .

The issues in dispute are not simply factional issues, or issues of personality. They affect the whole future of the party; they are to decide whether the Socialist Party shall reconstruct its policy and practice in accord with revolutionary Socialism, or whether it shall persist officially as a party of bourgeois liberal social reform, avoiding all actual problems of the Revolution.

These issues are fundamental, and cannot be dodged. Clear the decks!

The central issue in dispute, which is the heart and soul of all other issues, is whether the Socialist Party shall affiliate with the Communist International of the proletarian revolution, or whether it shall affiliate with some other "International" of the betrayers of Socialism.

The Left Wing enthusiastically and unequivocally accepts affiliation with the Communist International, the heir of the revolutionary First International. The moderates—Right Wing and Centre—want affiliation with the yellow "International."

Hillquit, in his *Call* article, repudiates the Communist International—saying that its organizers are "dictatorial." Precisely what the bourgeois says about the Bolsheviks! Dictatorial—because it excluded Hillquit and all the other apologists of moderate petty bourgeois "Socialism." The Communist International would not be the Communist International if it did not ruthlessly, dictatorially exclude all actual or potential counter-revolutionary elements.

Hillquit admits that the Second International broke down under the test of war,—a fact which he denied only one year ago. Surely, the revolutionary upsurge in the party has accomplished something! He repudiates Berne, half-heartedly—another accomplishment for the Left. After repudiating the Communist International—that historic act at Moscow, providing new energy and enthusiasm to the revolutionary proletariat,—Hillquit says: "The task of organizing the Third International is still before us." Still before us—what a travesty, what a monumental expression of charlatanism and opportunism! In a letter to the N. E. C., outlining the draft of a declaration of principles, which the N. E. C. adopted as its own, Hillquit says concerning his International:

It [the N. E. C.] recognizes the necessity of reorganizing the Socialist International along more autonomous and radical lines. The Socialist Party of the United States is not committed to many traditional principles, which has shown itself retrograde on many points, and totally devoid of creative force. Nor is it affiliated with the Communist Congress of Moscow whose principles and policies seem to be adjusted primarily to countries in active revolution, and whose composition is so one-sided as to render it inadequate for the task of regenerating the organized world movement of Socialism. It should be the aim of the Socialist Party of America to stimulate and hasten the



reunion of all radical and vital forces of Socialism and labor in all countries.

The rejection of the Communist Congress adequately characterizes this proposal. It is counter-revolutionary, a betrayal of the tasks imposed upon Socialism by revolutionary events.

The complaint that the Communist International is "one-sided" is characteristic. One side alone is revolutionary Socialism. It excludes the reactionary Labor Party of England; it excludes the pro-war, compromising majority of the French Socialist Party; it excludes the bloody traitors of the Ebert-Scheidemann Party and the hesitating, compromising Independent Socialists of Germany; it excludes Morris Hillquit, Victor Berger & Co.—the official Socialist Party; but it includes all the vital elements of revolutionary Socialism—the Bolsheviks, the Spartacists, the Communists of Hungary, the revolutionary Socialist parties of Italy and Norway, the Left Wing of our party. These alone can form a Communist International, revolutionary, aggressive, organizing the proletariat for the conquest of power. We do not want a chop-suey International, with traitors to Socialism and butchers of the proletarian revolution to gether with the rebels they assassinate.

Hillquit wants another International. It can consist of nothing else than the elements rejected by the Communist International. These are the Hendersons, the Brantings, the Renaudels, the Longuets, the Eberts and Scheidemanns, the Kautskys,—traitors to Socialism, all! In this international revolutionary crisis, shall the American Socialist party affiliate with the betrayers of the Revolution? Shall our Party come to the rescue of the Eberts and the Scheidemanns, the Hendersons and the Brantings, all of whom are rejected by the revolutionary proletariat, all of whom accepted an imperialistic war and intrigued against the proletarian revolution? Or shall we unite with the makers of the proletarian revolution—the Lenines and the Liebknechts?

It is infamous, this proposal of Hillquit. It is the measure of his small soul, of his petty ideals, of his craven and compromising policy. The party must repudiate this policy of the corner-grocer!

The "International" that Hillquit and the N. E. C. propose is a compromise International, a miserable travesty of the real thing. It would not be an International of revolutionary Socialism, since all the revolutionary elements accept the Communist International. The dregs of moderate "Socialism" would coalesce in this new "International," the yellow International of the bourgeois liberals, of the reactionary trades unionists, of the masters of words and poltroons in action, of that "Socialism" which betrayed the proletariat and Socialism.

No! This is not the "International" for a revolutionary Socialist Party.

There must be no reaction. There must be no crying after the dead, no return to the past. Socialism has been revolutionized by the proletarian revolution in action; the Socialist Party has been transformed by events and by the agitation of the Left Wing,—it shall affiliate with the Communist International! Let Hillquit & Co. join the Labor Party and then affiliate with his proposed yellow International.

In this matter, Hillquit is pursuing his usual opportunistic policy, of compromise and playing both ends against the middle. He was always a "centrist," two years ago Comrade Lenin branded him as a "centrist," and in this problem of the International Hillquit is still a miserable "centrist." The centre is the worst enemy of revolutionary Socialism, as is proven by revolutionary experience. This is Lenin's opinion of the "centre."

The centre is the heaven of petty bourgeois phrases, of lip internationalism, of cowardly opportunism, of compromise with the social-patriots. The fact is that the centre is not convinced of the necessity of a revolution against the government of its own country; it does not preach that kind of a revolution, it does not wage an incessant fight for the revolution, and it resorts to the lowest, super-Marxist dodges to get out of the difficulty. The members of the centre group are routine worshippers, eaten up by the gangrene of legality, corrupted by the parliamentary comedy, bureaucrats accustomed to nice sinecures. Historically and economically they do not represent any special stratum of society; they only represent the transition from the old-fashioned labor movement, such as it was from 1871 to 1914, to the new movement which was objectively necessary at the time of the first world-wide war of Imperialism, and which has inaugurated the social-revolutionary era.

This is fundamental—a new movement is necessary. Socialism must be reconstructed. The implications of accepting the Communist International are revolutionary—the reconstruction of the policy and practice of the Socialist Party. The moderates reject this vital task of reconstruction, hence they reject the Communist International. Clear the decks!

The slogan of the moderates is: Split the Party for moderate, petty bourgeois Socialism, for the yellow "International"!

The slogan of the Left Wing is: Conquer the Party for revolutionary Socialism, for the Communist International!

## N. E. C. Splits the Party!

*Declaration issued at Chicago by L. E. Katterfeld and A. Wagenknecht, N. E. C. minority members; C. E. Ruthenberg, Secretary Local Cleveland; Louis C. Fraina, Secretary Local Boston; James Larkin, Left Wing Section Socialist Party of New York City; John Keracher, State Secretary Michigan Socialist Party; and the translator-secretaries of the seven expelled Federations.*

**V**IOLET every principle of fair play and square dealing and disregarding every constitutional provision to the contrary, the National Executive Committee at its session in Chicago, May 24 to 30th, expelled the state organization of the Socialist Party in Michigan constituting nearly 6,000 members, without a trial; suspended the Russian, Lithuanian, Polish, Lettish, Hungarian, Ukrainian and South Slavic federations of the party, constituting more than 30,000 members and—worst of all, and let it be said to their everlasting shame—are autocratically holding up the national membership referendums for the election of a new national executive committee, international delegates, international secretary and the holding of a national convention.

Never before in the history of the Socialist Party have party officials been so lost to all sense of decency, and democracy. A willful group of seven members out of a total national executive committee membership of fifteen, ten of whom attended the meeting, usurped power which the constitution does not grant them and which the Socialist Party membership never did intend any servants of the party to have. This willful group of seven did not however act as servants of the party, but as dictators and tyrants to defeat the expressed will of the membership and to perpetuate themselves in office.

Unbelievable as it may seem, seven officials of the party had the monumental effrontery to assume the right to expell and suspend 40,000 members. Think of it! That such a dastardly deed should ever be perpetrated upon the rank and file of our organization is actually beyond the conception of every party member. And yet, it was done—it was done by those whom you elected to serve you. Instead they are betraying you, disrupting the organization and their every act at the meeting denies the right of the membership to fully and freely express itself upon the question of party principles and tactics.

The objects of the autocratic seven are as plain as daylight. Like a tidal wave, the demand for the tactics and principles of that kind of Socialism which stands true to the working class at all times has swept the party. The thousands of comrades of the party who were sincerely attempting to convince the party members that a more revolutionary kind of Socialism was necessary were known as the "left wing" faction. This left wing in our party understood clearly that the Scheidemann brand of Socialism stands for the betrayal and defeat of the working class and that only the Socialism of Liebknecht and Lenin had within it the potentialities of success and victory. It was to "rescue" the party from this left wing faction, to clean out of it all who stood bravely against pure and simple reformism, that the seven tyrannical national executive members threw 40,000 members out of the party.

The following course of events seems to have been determined by the autocratic seven very largely by causing outside of regular sessions and voting as a unit:

1.—They started with an attack upon the Socialist Party of Michigan. They sensed the fact that the outcome of the referendum elections of a new National Executive Committee was doubtful. They knew that Michigan would vote overwhelmingly against all members of the willful seven running for re-election. So they trumped up the charge that the decision of Michigan not to make campaigns on the basis of reform measures constitutes a violation of the Party Constitution.

There was no trial, no opportunity for defense offered to the Michigan comrades. A motion to allow Michigan a chance to interpret their action was voted down. The right to appear at a trial was denied.

Expulsion meant throwing out over three thousand Left Wing votes. On with the expulsion of Michigan!

2.—But the expulsion of Michigan was apparently not sufficient to decide the elections in favor of the reactionary moderates. At a subsequent session, accordingly, it was decided to destroy the whole election.

The N. E. C. instructed the Secretary not to tabulate the vote or to make it public. They nullified the referendum vote, destroyed the will of the membership in order to retain control—and most of these N. E. C. members are on re-election, interested parties.

There were absolutely no valid grounds for this drastic action of sabotage. No proof of alleged irregularities was offered. The action was based upon the fact that the members of these Federations had voted solid against the moderates.

This sabotage of the will of the membership was camouflaged as an "investigation" of the ballots, the investigating committee consisting of three of the most

reactionary Right Wingers. The next morning, realizing how raw the deal looked, one comrade was added to the committee whose name deserves respect.

This action is a violation of the party constitution, which specifically prohibits executive officials from interfering with the processes of the membership.

It is a violation of the spirit of the party, an attempt to isolate the party from the currents of revolutionary Socialism now vitalizing every Socialist Party in the world.

The N. E. C. action is equivalent to stealing the elections. The party must act sternly to rebuke this official chicanery.

3.—After this betrayal of the Party the willful seven seemed to fear the results of the National Convention, which had been called for August 30th. A way must be devised to control the Convention. Happy thought: Suspend the federations that have endorsed the Left Wing, and we are safe. Another caucus held. Results: suspension of the Russian, Lettish, Polish, Ukrainian, Lithuanian and South Slavic Federations from the Socialist Party—over thirty thousand members.—An attempt to assure the election of reactionary delegates to the National Convention to approve the abominable actions of the N. E. C. majority.

No written statement of all the charges against them was given the translator secretaries. Their request for two weeks time to communicate with their Executive Committees was voted down. No real trial was granted them. They were unceremoniously kicked out.

The purpose was clear. It was conscious. It was a deliberate move to crush the revolutionary spirit now prevailing in the Socialist Party.

4. Feeling that despite these suspensions the left wing might still find itself in the majority at the coming national convention, in fact, confessing that it would, they then proceeded to form a corporation, the majority directors of which are of the same stamp as the willful seven, and into the hands of these directors is to be placed the entire property of the Socialist Party including the new headquarters building upon which \$10,000 has been paid. These directors can not be recalled by the party members, can not be removed by the national executive committee and only in case these directors leave the Socialist Party or are by chance expelled do they cease being directors.

One member of the N. E. C. confessed openly that they wanted such arrangement that they could control the property "for Socialism" even if the Convention was captured by the opposition.

When we remember that most of the willful seven are candidates for re-election to the national executive committee and candidates for election as international delegates, who knew themselves defeated and fully understood that official machinery of the party was about to pass into the hands of the left wing, the revolutionary element, then these acts to retain control become doubly despicable. Then, although unconstitutional, they are also shown up as hysterical attempts on the part of the present inactive, inefficient officialdom to perpetuate itself in office against the will of the party membership.

But these desperate tactics of the right wing members of the national executive committee must not be construed alone as a frantic effort of defeated officials to retain control of the party. This is part and parcel of the controversy upon principles and tactics in the party. It is the struggle between the right wing and the left wing, between moderate petty bourgeois Socialism and revolutionary proletarian Socialism.

The moderates on the national executive committee show no realization of the problems of the international revolution. They do not see the need of reconstructing the party policy in accord with the experience gained by our comrades in Europe, or do not act toward that end.

The crisis is serious. It affects the future of Socialism and the proletariat. We are confident that revolutionary Socialism will conquer the party. It will prevail despite the sabotage of the willful seven. Let no comrade feel disheartened. Not one member should quit the party. In fact, every member should work with might and main to get members and build, build, build. We know the game of the moderates. They want the left wing to desert the party, leaving the party machinery and property in the hands of the autocrats. They will be disappointed in this. Every radical Socialist will stick and stick to the end.

Insist that the referendum votes upon the election of a new national executive committee be counted and made public. Insist that the expulsion of Michigan and the federations shall not prevail. Second the referendum motions to reverse the acts of the willful seven, acts unconstitutional and most outrageous. Rally to the left wing, comrades, for to the left wing belongs the future of Socialism.

The slogan of the moderates is—"Split the party for moderate petty bourgeois Socialism." The slogan of the left wing is—"Conquer and unite the party for revolutionary Socialism, for the Communist International."



# The Left Wing Sweeps Massachusetts

AT THE State Convention of the Socialist Party of Massachusetts, held at Allston, May 30, 31 and June 1, a complete victory was scored by the Left Wing, by revolutionary Socialism. On all fundamental issues and resolutions, the Left Wing conquered by a vote of more than three to one. The convention favored a complete reorganization of the party policy and practice in accord with revolutionary Socialism.

The minority issued a protest against the decision of the convention to send two delegates to the Left Wing Conference, June 21, on the ground that this act violated the party constitution. The protest was signed by 48 delegates, representing Finnish branches, who withdrew from the convention. The moderates tried to hold a rump convention of their own, but it was a fizzle; after which some of the Finnish delegates returned to the Party Convention. The protest was made a part of the convention record, with the comment that the party constitution does not forbid conferences of the membership for purposes of agitating within the party for changes in policy and practice.

This convention marked a real revolution in the Socialist Party of Massachusetts. Last year the Left Wing was in the minority, as in all previous conventions. But in one year the Left has conquered power. The important resolutions will indicate the revolutionary spirit of the Convention. This is the resolution on the Left Wing Manifesto and Program:

"Whereas, the international Socialist movement is in process of reorganization, accepting a new militant policy and practice in accord with the revolutionary requirements of the epoch of the final struggle against Capitalism; and

"Whereas, the new Communist International alone represents revolutionary Socialism, with which every Socialist Party adhering to fundamental Socialism must affiliate; be it therefore

"Resolved, by the Socialist Party of Massachusetts, in convention assembled, that we accept the Left Wing Manifesto and Program as a basis for reconstructing the national platform and policy of the Party, and align it with the Socialism of the Bolshevik-Spartan International."

Recognizing the necessity "of organizing all the communistic or Left Wing elements of the Socialist Party" in order "to conquer the Party for the revolutionary class struggle," the convention resolved:

"1.—To urge all locals of the party to elect delegates to the National Conference of the Left Wing of the Socialist Party, June 21, on the basis of one delegate for every 500 members or less.

"2.—That the Convention itself elect two delegates to participate in the Left Wing Conference."

The two delegates elected were John Ballam, editor of the new state organ, *The New England Worker*, and Marion Sprinkle, State Secretary.

Turning to the class struggle in action, the convention adopted the following resolution on the Winnipeg strike:

"The Socialist Party of Massachusetts, in convention assembled, greets the general strike of the workers of Winnipeg and Toronto as one of the increasing skirmishes in the great struggle of the working class against their brutal exploiters and oppressors, the capitalists, now being waged in all the countries of the world.

"This strike is a school of revolutionary practice for the Winnipeg and Toronto workers; but it is of much wider significance as a tremendously important example to the workers of Canada and all other countries.

"It gives encouragement and invaluable assistance to our comrade-workers of Russia, Communist Germany and Hungary; it provides stimulus and inspiration to the working class struggle all over the world.

"The Winnipeg and Toronto strike proves that the old passive strike is dead, that it cannot break the power of the capitalists, and that the strikes of the worker must become general, adopting more militant tactics against Capitalism.

"It demonstrates, moreover, the utter bankruptcy of Capitalism and shows the urgent necessity of the working class of the whole country using the general mass strike against decayed Capitalism and its state, inaugurating the government of the industrially organized workers and Councils, with full control of all industries by the working class."

In conformity with this resolution, the convention adopted a resolution unequivocally accepting industrial unionism, which was overwhelmingly defeated in previous conventions.

Resolutions were adopted sending the convention's fraternal greetings to Eugene V. Debs, Big Bill Haywood and all other class war and political prisoners

now in jail; while another resolution calls "upon the working class of America to defend their democratic rights by means of united and energetic proletarian mass action—liberate the political prisoners of your class by general political strikes and demonstrations; assert your rights of free speech and assemblage by defying the violent forces of the capitalist class." The resolution protesting against intervention in Russia declares that "only the resolute action of the workers of the invading countries can end the murderous adventure of the capitalists, by means of revolutionary pressure." The resolution protesting against intervention in Finland and the atrocities of the White Guard government protected by the Allies, sends fraternal greetings to the Communist Party and the masses of Finland.

## Turn to the Left!

Local Battle Creek, Michigan, has adopted this motion: "That Local Battle Creek go on record as sanctioning the Left Wing movement"

Local Salt Lake City, Utah, on May 27, adopted the following resolution:

"Whereas, the Socialist Party of the United States has ceased to function as a proletarian revolutionary organization; and

"Whereas, political action alone has proven inefficient and must be supported by revolutionary industrial action; therefore be it

"Resolved, that we, the members of the Salt Lake City local of the Socialist Party of the United States heartily approve and endorse the Manifesto of the Left Wing Section of the Socialist Party of New York City; and be it further

"Resolved, that we demand that the next convention of the Socialist Party adopt the principles outlined in the above mentioned Manifesto as the National Platform of the Socialist Party of the United States."

Local Salt Lake City further endorsed and accepted *The Revolutionary Age* as its official party paper.

A split took place at the Convention of the Jewish Federation of the Socialist Party, held in Boston, May 30-June 1. The convention was packed by the reactionary minority. About one-third the delegates, representing at least 2500 members of the Federation's 6000 members, seceded and organized the Jewish Communist Federation.

The German Federation of the Socialist Party, at its Convention in Rochester last week, endorsed the Left Wing Manifesto; and decided that, should the Emergency Convention not accept the Manifesto as the basis for a new platform, to withdraw from the Socialist Party.

The resolution accepting the Communist International was adopted amidst inspiring enthusiasm:

"Whereas, the National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party in January aligned our Party with the social-patriotic 'international' at Berne representing the worst elements of the old International; and

"Whereas, the N. E. C. at its recent session repudiated Berne but equally repudiated the Communist International formed at Moscow—a miserable dodging of the issue characteristic of the compromising 'centre'; and

"Whereas, the Communist International alone represents revolutionary Socialism; be it therefore resolved:

"1.—That the State Convention of the Socialist Party of Massachusetts condemns the N. E. C. attitude as treason to international Socialism, the Socialist Party and the working class.

"2.—That we demand immediate and unequivocal withdrawal of the Socialist Party from the old International and Bureau.

"3.—That we call upon the membership to affiliate alone with the Communist International of the proletarian revolution."

Having conquered the power of the party, the Left Wing realized that, to hold and use this power, new methods of agitation are necessary in accord with the mass character of the proletarian struggle. The platform adopted cuts out all the old reforms and petty struggle. The following declaration (which is to be committee of three) was adopted in order to cut the agitation loose from the old petty bourgeois "liberal"

"Besides the usual methods of propaganda in the streets and hall meetings—

"We recommend to all members of the Socialist movement to give more attention to their own work—where you can reach all of your comrade workers,—

"All Socialists in a shop or mill must get together and organize shop committees. Study the conditions of the exploitation of the workers, and find ways to bring it home to them and show the way out.

"Local leaflets that deal with the miserable conditions in a particular shop or mill are of the greatest value as propaganda. The down-trodden slaves, who

scorn Socialism in print, or who are so tired or intimidated that they don't read Socialist leaflets on general topics, are very much interested in what concerns them 'bodily'—and can be stirred to action.

"The next step is a mass meeting in the shop or in the gates. Speakers in overalls can be interchanged between departments or shops in order to avoid detection by bosses, or brought in from the outside.

"Then comes the strike, which up to this time has been outrageously neglected by the Socialists, and left almost completely to the labor fakirs of the A. F. of L. Socialist activity in the shops means mass action on the part of the unorganized; it means mass action by the membership itself of unionized shops instead of bargaining with the bosses by union officials. If a fraction of the funds that Socialists collect for the support of strikes were used for organized mass action, the country would assume a new aspect in a brief time.

"The strike in itself in most cases is of more value as a method of propaganda than of material gain. Meetings and leaflets during strikes are important means of proletarian mass education that Socialists cannot afford to neglect. Mass education does away with the old prejudice of 'won' and 'lost' strikes. Every strike is won if the masses are stirred to action and receive an education in class consciousness and the class war,—where 'lost' means simply a temporary retreat and preparation for a new attack against the enemy—Capitalism.

"Shop committees provide real useful work for every Socialist himself, and brings into action the proletarian masses—the regiments of the Social Revolution."

The final resolution adopted by the convention was one severely condemning the N. E. C. for its usurpatory actions at the recent sessions:

"The National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party, at its session of May 24-30, decided:

"1.—To expel the Socialist Party of the State of Michigan, for alleged violation of the national platform and constitution of the party,—without giving the Michigan comrades a hearing.

"2.—To refuse to tabulate and make public the votes on the recent party referendum to elect members of the N. E. C., international delegates and international secretary.

"3.—To approve the expulsion from the party of the Left Wing branches of Local New York, and the expulsion of Locals Queens, Kings, Buffalo, Rochester, Tonawanda and language branches.

"4.—To suspend from the party the Russian, Lithuanian, Polish, Lithuanian, Ukrainian, South Slavic and Hungarian Federations of the party, because these Federations are Left Wing.

"The purpose of these usurpatory actions, which expel at least 40,000 revolutionary members from the Socialist Party, is to retain control of the Party for the petty bourgeois reformers by means of (a) stealing the elections, which have overwhelmingly favored the Left Wing candidates, and (b) by packing the national Party convention to be held August 30, so that the moderates and Right Wing shall control the convention.

"Comrades! The convention of the Socialist Party of Massachusetts protests vigorously against the outrageous actions of the N. E. C.—the majority members of which are traitors to Socialism. We express our solidarity with the expelled comrades.

"We demand:

"1.—An immediate re-instatement for the Michigan comrades.

"2.—The immediate recall of the motion suspending the Language Federations, this suspension being a violation of the national Party constitution, which gives power of suspension or expulsion to the state and local organizations, on which ground we refuse to recognize this suspension.

"3.—The immediate tabulation and publication of the votes on the referendum election.

"We urge the Socialist Party of Michigan not to recognize its expulsion, and still function as the Socialist Party of Michigan.

"We suggest to the suspended Federations to stay within the party as members of state organizations.

"We urge that Left Wing delegates be elected to the convention of August 30. The revolutionary Socialists are the Socialist Party.

"Our answer to the brutal, reactionary N. E. C. must be a more intense and uncompromising struggle to conquer the Party for revolutionary Socialism for the Communist International."

The convention, finally, urges that *The Revolutionary Age* become the central organ of the national Left Wing of the Socialist Party, and recommends to Local Boston placing the *Age* at the disposal of the Left Wing Conference.



# The Counter-revolution in the Party

By I. E. Ferguson

Report of the N. E. C. sessions at Chicago

THE counter-revolution within the American Socialist Party has begun. It is comic in its explosiveness and impotence. It makes piercingly clear the tragedies averted by the quick success of the Left Wing movement within the party.

The National Executive Committee came together May twenty-fourth, at Chicago, and before two hours had gone by, without charges, hearing, or intelligent statement of any kind, seven men "expelled" five thousand Socialists of the State of Michigan from the American Socialist Party. And that was only the beginning. When the true logic of this action reveals itself, as the business advances, the expulsion—slaughter will quickly jump from the 5000 to 6000 of Michigan to the more than 60,000 already clearly within the Left Wing—within the "insurgency" which "must be put down."

Hillquit is not here. He is sick. His intellectual presence is evidenced by a communication outlining the stand of the N. E. C. on the issues before us, national and international. The proposed statement is of a sick mind. It faces no issue squarely; it is sheer nothingness; it is not even clever in its equivocations.

One example will suffice. On the issue of the two Internationals, Hillquit is critical of the Berne Conference and opposed to the Communist International. He wants "reunion"—with Luxemburg and Liebknecht dead, murdered under the auspices of opportunistic Socialism! Hillquit joins all Internationals—and none.

Otherwise, aside from unprincipled statement of principles which can be considered after revision by the Committee, Hillquit is advertised as being in favor of a party split.

Berger, too, is absent. But he has several mouthpieces here.

The "expulsion" of Michigan was voted by Shiplacoff, O'Neal, Goebel, Kraft, Stedman, Work, Hogan and Holt. The contrary votes were two, Wagenknecht and Katterfeld. The other absentees are Clark and Herman, in jail, and Niels of California.

The motion was made by Stedman, after recommendation of action by the Executive Secretary, Adolph Germer. Stedman moves to destroy the votes which will put him off the N. E. C. and which will help defeat him for International Delegate. Work and Berger likewise need to escape the Michigan votes. Also O'Neal, Shiplacoff and Hillquit, in relation to international representatives.

Only John Work squirmed a bit under Wagenknecht's descriptives of this method of winning an election. Work would have given Michigan a "hearing," but the amendment failing, he accepted Stedman's motion.

Holt of Oklahoma thought the Committee might with a few days. The action of the Committee as "explained" by Stedman, was based on the adoption by the Michigan State Convention of an amendment to the State Constitution prohibiting advocacy of reforms in the propaganda of Socialism. This resolution of the Michigan Convention, everything else aside, had not yet been finally acted upon by the Michigan membership. It appeared that the result of the Michigan referendum would be available within three or four days. Holt was willing to wait until the membership of Michigan had gone "contrary" to the national platform, but Stedman had "a hunch" that the vote would be overwhelmingly in favor of the Convention resolution, and this settled the matter.

Katterfeld and Wagenknecht defended the Michigan stand against advocacy of reforms. Wagenknecht pointed out that other States, notably Wisconsin, had seen fit to omit our "ultimate demands" from their platforms. He might have added that it is only by casuistical argument from a chance phrase or two that one can discover any "ultimate demands" in the National platform of 1918. Wagenknecht impressed the vote-stealing aspect of Stedman's motion, and added good-naturedly that it would only be a short time until we changed the national platform to conform to that of Michigan.

To which Hogan retorted that it would be "just as well to dishand the party"—and this was the sum total of his judgy wisdom in relation to this question. And Goebel played the clown to perfection. Once before the writer saw the excitable, peevish Goebel in action, and that was at the meeting of the N. E. C. in Chicago when Goebel went into wild raving against the party's anti-war stand. Now he is the most vociferous exponent of "real Socialism!"

Shiplacoff and O'Neal indulged in evasive refinements and sophistries which simply revealed that they were acting somewhat under the whip—and there was a fellow present by name of Gerber, from New York, a sort of Mephisto of small politics, presumably one of the coterie who planned this performance. Not that Shiplacoff and O'Neal were not against the Michigan position; only they are the kind of men who

must be driven into action with a whip.

Another tangent of the Michigan discussion was the stand of the Michigan Convention on the subject of religion. The Michigan position is that the subject of religion should not be under party taboo, but should be frankly presented according to the materialistic interpretation of history. Committeeman Kraft of New Jersey was especially sarcastic on this point as a deviation from party regularity, arguing that it was members of the Knights of Columbus who secured his release from Atlanta, where he was serving a term under the Espionage Act. . . . The first time the word "revolution" happened to be mentioned in the discussion, this elderly gentleman from New Jersey raised both hands in derision. Perhaps he missed the whole record of world events during the past two years. Kraft is unquestionably a fine, worthy, idealistic gentleman. His presence on this Committee, and its accord with his political outlook, tells in a word the present status of the official control of the American Socialist Party.

The clown-like Goebel hailed in this religious clause "the cloven hoof"—the basis of "organizing to fight the Socialist Party." The weightiness of Goebel's learning about Socialism does not keep him anchored very long at a time. He is constantly jumping up, walking around, pounding the table; and his talk is a squeakish whine about one triviality after another.

It is a curious spectacle, this group of half dozen old men taking upon themselves the stemming of the oncoming waves of a re-vitalized American Socialism. It answers itself without a word from the outside.

So much for the first session. There will be several days of lifeless life to this conference, though the first act leaves no question of what is to follow.

A week ago a history-making convention closed in Chicago with such a singing of the Internationale as was never heard in that city before. The words of a dozen languages merged in robust melody.

At this N. E. C. meeting one could not escape consciousness of the unsung dirgeful accompaniment: "The old-time religion, the good old-time religion, the old-time religion is good enough for us."

## Session of May 26th

All on a Monday morning the half dozen elder statesmen of the Socialist Party are going to dispose of the Left Wing movement. That is the special order of business. . . . It is like the Senate Judiciary Committee getting rid of Bolshevism by orders of excommunication via imprisonment. It is lucky for many of us that the Socialist Party National Executive Committee has no prison at its disposal and no power of deportation. . . .

The boast of these elder statesmen is the ancient vintage of their statesmanship. Constantly they repeat the number of years which separates the present from the time they acquired the Socialist consciousness. They do not seem remotely to suspect that there might be need for a new kind of Socialist consciousness in a new epoch of history.

The Committee proceeds with its task. "The method," "the method," "the method"—that is the constant complaint, supported by sweeping generalities and accusations based on most petty items of detail, uncorroborated and not open to answer. One would never suspect that there is anything involved in this flood of righteous indignation other than the accumulation of details of "unconstitutionality."

Out with the elections—that was the wholesale order for this morning. The Federations will be on the carpet tonight. Elections aside—pending investigation for "irregularities"—the mathematical problem is how to regulate the further expulsion so as to insure a "safe" Convention.

Because of this cancellation of elections until the Convention meets, the Committee itself calls a Special Convention. Goebel, Work, Hogan, go on record that the election issue is the only emergency. Shiplacoff realizes that there is an "emergency" aside from the elections. Wagenknecht and Katterfeld agree to the Special Convention except as to the election matter.

The discussion opened with a statement by Goebel that the initiation of the referendums now before the party were "deliberately fraudulent," because they came from delegate bodies, instead of from membership bodies. He said that the method of carrying on the elections was the "open shameless method of slates . . . accompanied with misleading comment." He complained that the official side was without papers, (though the Milwaukee Leader, so far as this district is concerned, pleaded for the re-election of

Berger, Stedman and Work). He indignantly charged that the Foreign Federations have banded together to capture the party. He failed to add for what purpose.

Julius Gerber was given the floor to report for the New York State Executive Committee as to the New York situation. The "report" was a speech, made up of accusations against the Left Wing, with several specifications of "unconstitutionality," and a general justification of everything done by the New York Executive Committee. Gerber answered a joint Federation protest against expulsions in New York of certain foreign branches. This protest came before the Committee directly after Gerber was on the ground.

Gerber's contention was that Local New York insists upon its right to compel all branches to adhere to the regular party platform, and that the Left Wing platform was adopted by the rebel branches "willfully" in violation of the party law. The petty sarcasms of Gerber, and the whistling astonishment of the venerable delegate from New Jersey, and the equally profound comments of the other elder statesmen, are not worth dwelling upon, though it is of this stuff that party history is being made. Gerber's sarcasm about Left Wing work within the party councils as showing no interest in "work against the capitalist system" is indicative of the grasp of issues here paraded as the acme of Socialist wisdom.

Referring to an application of a Russian branch for a charter in New York, which was refused, Gerber "explained" that 2 Russian branches were enough for New York. The writer is informed that there are 60,000 Russians in New York. Even Chicago has 7 Russian branches, of which some are already unwieldy.

Without an item outside of the Gerber's speech to the N. E. C., it was made evident that the Executive Committee of Local New York and of New York State had substituted their control for that of the party membership. This seems to be the precedent upon which the N. E. C. is proceeding.

One gem of the discussion was that the New York Local does not "expell" anybody. It simply "reorganizes,"—according to Shiplacoff—"a mere formality."

Germer added the item of the mysterious disappearance of 15,000 ballots. It was all very, very mysterious, until Wagenknecht did a little questioning and developed the facts that this was a computation based on weighing ballots, making no allowances for differences in weight of different kinds of print paper.

Kraft challenged the opposition to make answer, to which Katterfeld responded. If there was any ballot-box stuffing, it ought to be investigated. But the voting of slates, which was so much protested, has been usual within the party. That was precisely the way Germer became National Secretary, by organized Federation slating. After reviewing the details of the discussion, Katterfeld went on to say that he took all the actions of the majority of the Committee serenely and expressed his assurance that they could not do enough to prevent victory within the party for revolutionary Socialism. He concluded that it was up to the majority of the Committee to prove their loyalty to the Socialist movement by handing over the power to the majority of the membership, if they want it, instead of wrecking the party to save their power.

With the elections and referendums temporarily invalidated, the Special Convention was moved by Work and unanimously carried, though Goebel protested the expense.

Then came the question of investigating the elections and the motion prevailed that the committee shall be appointed outside the N. E. C. Wagenknecht amended: "from both sides." O'Neal, in high dudgeon: "The party does not recognize the Left Wing!" Goebel, aside to Wagenknecht: "Both sides will be represented." Amendment defeated, 2 to 8.

Next: Constitution "interpreted" to invalidate some Left Wing candidacies for International Delegates. (Reed and Ferguson). It must have meant to exclude those not members three years. The logic for the 3-year rule is excellent. The fact is that the members have already acted under a Constitution which does not prohibit these candidacies. Goebel already has insisted that there is no personal element in the elections; that this is, for once, a vote on issues. This belated "interpretation" helps to register the vote on issues.

Wagenknecht amended that this ruling be not applied to an election already completed, when it was apparent that there was knowledge or fear of Left Wing success. Amendment defeated.

Shiplacoff made the complacent assumption that those not in the party three years could not know anything about Socialism. He was just as charitable to the membership which supported these candidates. He is a personal gainer by this elimination of contestants.

(Continued on page six)



Monday evening session, May 26th.

Motion by Kraft: whereas, and whereas, and whereas—let 30,000 members of the Socialist Party stand suspended! All the "whereases" of the Kraft motion were based on the language of a protest against the expulsion of foreign branches in New York, the protest being signed by the Translator-Secretaries of the Russian, Lettish, Lithuanian, Ukrainian, Hungarian, South Slavic and Polish Federations. The history of this transaction shows its purely arbitrary and vindictive nature; it shows on its face how every subterfuge is used to disfranchise the opposition in order to win control of the coming Emergency Convention for the present officialdom.

Gerber of New York had volunteered to the N. E. C. certain allegations of fact and sweeping charges as to illegal voting by Federation branches on the party referendums. The meagre showing of facts was never scrutinized by the Committee; no explicit charges were made against any particular ones of the Federations; nobody was asked or given the chance to answer Gerber's assertions. It became evident as the discussion proceeded that the Federations had been hampered in the elections by holding back of ballots; that Left Wing votes had been freely kept out, or even destroyed after receipt in the New York office. In Milwaukee, for instance, the Federations were refused ballots from the County office, and these finally obtained were imported from Minnesota. In Chicago, a Ukrainian branch of 300 members was given 35 ballots. At this time no more need be said about the elections, which are to be "investigated," than that there was nothing definite enough before the N. E. C. with respect to the elections upon which to base any action against the Federations. This the Committee itself recognized.

The insistence of the Translator-Secretaries on tolerance for the adherents of the Left Wing was condemned as "disloyalty" to the party platform and a breach of the party constitution. Judgment being duly entered, the "trial" began.

The document of protest stated that the Executive Committees of Local New York and of New York State had arbitrarily expelled three Federation branches; that the National Executive Secretary had reported these expulsions as arising from the affiliation of these branches with the Left Wing Section; and that this action was not only a disgrace to the Socialist movement, but that "the Russian, Lithuanian, Lettish, Ukrainian, Hungarian, and South Slavic Federations have endorsed the Left Wing program, recognizing in it the most advanced expression of revolutionary Socialist principles, and we declare that these Federations will brook no opposition to the stand they have taken and will not consider as valid any proposal from any Executive Committee, either county, state or national, to recede from that position. We do not consider that any Executive Committee has any right to pass on the legality of the Left Wing position, as far as the party law is concerned." The "demands" were for rescinding the New York expulsions, with censure of the officials responsible; also for "a clear and unequivocal expression" by the N. E. C. as to its attitude toward the Left Wing position, "inasmuch as no such expression has as yet come from the National Executive Committee."

"Such a drastic statement," announced Committee-man Kraft, "calls for drastic action on the part of the Executive Committee." After his series of "whereases," consisting of citations of the sentences, above quoted as "in defiance of the rules of the Socialist Party," came the motion that these seven Federations "stand suspended until further notice."

Motion seconded by Shiplacoff. "It is the only course left for us. . . . Two weeks ago I would not have said so." (It is during these two weeks that some of the party election returns have become known). Shiplacoff argued that the main business of the party has been that of a political party; an American political party to develop an American political movement based on the principles of Socialism. The Federations were organized to facilitate propaganda among immigrants. The nationalistic influence and the war have unbalanced many, at both extremes. The foreign element is in the minority; we must build on "native elements." (The Indians? In the steel, packing, cotton, clothing and woolen industries, the average of "foreigners" is 64%. The "native" proletariat is predominantly black. There is no proletarian element in America which surpasses in calibre the membership of these seven Federations).

The Lithuanian Translator-Secretary, James Stilson, was spokesman for the Federations. He pointed out that this was the first statement of the official party attitude toward the Left Wing; that at its last meeting, in January, the N. E. C. knew of the Left Wing movement within the party, but did not act, presumably because it had no constitutional power to act. He denied that this movement was of such recent origin, showing its definite organization early in 1917 through the Socialist Propaganda League, with a separate paper, *The Internationalist* (subsequently *The New Internationalist*). The Manifesto of this League

## The Counter-revolution in the Party

(Continued from page five)

appeared in the *Minnesota Organizer*, the official State paper, in February and again in March of 1917. If the officialdom made no condemnation of the organization of the Left Wing, how could it now condemn endorsement of the Left Wing program?

Comrade Wagenknecht added that the Left Wing movement was a natural expression at this time in the Socialist parties of every country.

Then came the climax of the seven days of this eventful N. E. C. meeting. Niels Christensen, Scandinavian Translator-Secretary, was granted the floor. In firm, deliberate language, impassioned yet clearly reasoned, he condemned the action of the Committee. "If this is your stand, then I want to be counted in with the others."

Seymour Stedman comes out of this discussion with the clear distinction of being the only one of the majority members of the N. E. C. who was frank enough to admit that the question of methods of bringing about the party change was beside the point; and that the organized voting of the Left Wing branches was entirely proper; and that, in general, the attempt to organize the Left Wing for capture of the party for their view point was legitimate and commendable for its efficiency. His argument was that there is a fundamental difference of understanding of the purposes of the Socialist Party upon which there must be a split. (He did not explain why he and his associates should not "suspend" themselves, instead of the successful opposition). The psychology of the American is to approach politics in an immediate way, and this is the basis upon which the Socialist Party started. It has developed a real political character in Wisconsin, New York, and to some extent in Ohio. Otherwise it has existed as an organization for education—education for the time when the revolution takes place. He has no fault to find with such an organization. The question is: shall we maintain ourselves as a political party? That is, a party for regular political campaigns, on current issues, with real purpose of winning offices, not campaigns as propaganda camouflage. Or shall we be a party with politics as an incidental affair? He is for politics, and others are against this stand because they cannot vote. They would be happy if Berger is not seated. (Because of their ideas about use of parliamentarism, or because Berger is Berger?) Stedman wants more Milwaukee "Socialism."

Comrade Stilson then asked if this meant that all of the Left Wing was to be thrown out? Stedman replied frankly that this was the sense in which he would vote. No other member of the Committee made answer.

The debate was continued by Comrade Wagenknecht. If there is to be a test of what the party stands for, it should be had before there is so much expelling. Let everybody vote for delegates to the Convention, and those who don't like the decision can get out. But there had better be a quick adjournment, or the Convention will be useless, because with the start of 5,000 and then 30,000 the Committee may yet get rid of the whole party. The proposition is to tear down the Federations because they have out-distanced the English-speaking movement, due to the fact that the efficiency in building up the English-speaking movement has been almost nil. This action is obviously taken to control the Convention. This action is a confession of lack of majority support. It may be due, fundamentally, to the fear that the Socialist Party is becoming too much a party of action; to the desire not to have any more imprisonments, to avoid such things as the May Day riots. The outstanding fact is that revolutionary parties have become parties of revolution, in deeds as well as in words.

Wagenknecht concluded his statement by emphasizing the naturalness of the growth of particular Federations in response to the revolutions in Europe. The Italian revolution will bring a great influx into the Italian Federation. It took some time to bring the conviction of the Soviet Government as a permanent institution, so that the response was not immediate. But the Russian Federation itself, which has had the largest recent growth, was just given a Translator-Secretary last Winter, and it now shows the splendid results of an intensive and aggressive campaign of education.

At this point the Finnish Translator-Secretary asked to be heard. This was another bomb in the camp of the Right Wing and Centrists. Askele assured the Committee that his Federation would go solidly with that this matter be let go until there should be a Convention.

Then came a long, judge-like harangue by Comrade O'Neal. He reviewed the history of revolutionary currents within the American Socialist movement, picking out the few instances of intellectual leaders who had flopped from extreme radicalism to extreme conservatism. (The writer recalls precisely the same argument, some of the same illustrations, and

almost the same sentences, as used by O'Neal in a pamphlet on Syndicalism written nearly seven years ago. Our profound "historian" analyzes the Left Wing movement and Syndicalism as the plaything of a handful of intellectuals, of exaggerated emotionalism, ignoring completely the real social and political basis of the two vital challenges—both mass movements—against the reformist parliamentarism of the Second International; the challenge against its Socialism, and the challenge against its tactics of a "political action" unrelated to the proletariat and its special class position and power. It is all a matter of "psychologizing" the "leaders," as O'Neal reads history).

The acknowledged spokesman i. e. the majority of the Committee, after explaining the psychology of radicalism and, much as Nordau deals with genius, reducing it all to a formula of emotional insanity, proceeded to explain further that the Left Wing, under the influence of the Russian Revolution, wants to transplant foreign policies and graft them on this country. No uniform methods can be adopted throughout the world. (Evidently the imperialistic diplomats at Paris did not consult with O'Neal, because their "internationalism" is much more that a formula of phrases.) No uniform methods can be adopted throughout the world (for each country its own Socialism, no matter that the nationalistic capitalists are but units of the world Capitalism arrayed against the world social revolution). We have been too long dominated by the German Social Democracy and do not want now to subject ourselves to Russian domination (therefore we remain as we are, i. e., under German domination).

A large part of O'Neal's argument concerned itself with the fact that Soviet imitation is not now historically justified in the United States, which is a logical criticism. But not of the Left Wing, because the idea of the Soviet in the Communist program goes with the actual period of revolution, and so it is stated in the Left Wing programs. The acceptance of the Bolshevik analysis of the present period as the era of world social revolution, the realization of finance-imperialism as the final stage of Capitalism, and the acceptance of a general revolutionary tactic in conformity with the present stage of struggle, does not mean a copying of the Russian experience in the United States without the fullest recognition of every special element in our situation. O'Neal insists rather upon the differences as fundamental, whereas passing history answers that it is the sameness and unity of the struggle in all countries which is fundamental.

O'Neal inadvertently, yet quite conclusively, disposed of the test of revolutionary-mindedness arising from convictions under the Espionage Act. They were "all a matter of chance," instancing Kraft's sentence to five years "for hardly saying anything." To this ironic truth must be added the reservation that there is a clear record of a National Security League hounding of a few outstanding champions of the working class.

Comrade Katterfeld put the responsibility for the present party confusion directly on the N. E. C. for its failure to call a Convention. The Left Wing organization within the party organization was necessary as the only means of allowing the party to function.

There was one thing in the whining of Goebel which the writer has noted. He was sure that what he said would be forgotten. Goebel was still hopeful of the Finns and Germans.

The Federation matter was put over again until the next afternoon.

\* \* \*

Tuesday morning, May 27th.

Motion by Goebel that an Emergency Convention be called for Labor Day. Amendment by Katterfeld, that it be called for August 2nd. On this amendment the minority members, Katterfeld and Wagenknecht, were joined by Shiplacoff. The date voted was August 30th, and the place, Chicago. The number of delegates, as at St. Louis, 200.

Tuesday, afternoon.

Comrade Keracher, as State Secretary, appeared before the Committee to get official confirmation of the action taken against the Michigan party. On the third guess, one of the Committee stated accurately the action taken: that the charter of Michigan had been revoked. The reason? O'Neal was designated to make the reply and haughtily put the Committee above the level of entering into explanations or argument with Comrade Keracher, stating merely that the anti-reform advocacy plank of the Michigan platform was a violation of the National Party law.

Secretary Germer then assumed the role of prosecuting attorney against the Federations. He charged them with attempting to dominate the party, citing a resolution against the Amnesty Convention which was originated in one of the Federation offices. This was a regular referendum proposition, handled in the regular way, but apparently it was intrusive for these "foreigners" to question the wisdom of the N. E. C. And great indeed, was the righteous indignation of the venerable Kraft. Germer detailed the figures of the growth of

(Continued on page seven)



# Chicago—Running True to Form

By Barnet Braverman

THE expected happened.

Once again moderate "Socialists" have been tried and have met all expectations of those who know them. This on May 18th and 19th, 1919, when the Socialist Party of Cook County, Illinois, held its convention and adopted a Left Wing platform.

I repeat, the moderate "Socialists" in this convention ran true to form. Not being in Germany they could not muster machine guns, poison gas, and bayonets against the revolutionary Left Wing that dominated the Cook County convention. The moderates answered the organized decisions and ideas of the Left with venomous vituperation, dilatory tactics; and failing in these, tried the wiles and blandishments of sentimental appeal about "comradeship" and "party unity."

"Let us keep party unity," pleaded the exponents of the moderates, only to follow this plea by bolting the convention. Some of the bolters threatened to organize another party; others considered the feasibility of purchasing space in the capitalist dailies to tell the public just why they, the moderates, bolted the convention. Brilliancy indeed!

As a quiet observer of the convention, I had ample opportunity and provocation to reflect upon the conduct of the reactionary minority with their mental incapacity to adjust themselves to a new historical situation.

If the reactionary moderates deemed party unity of importance, why did they bolt the convention? Couldn't they tolerate the proposal, "All power to the workers"? They didn't have enough poise to maintain a philosophical, unperturbed attitude when they saw their middle class reforms thrown into the discard by the convention. Middle class rule in the Socialist Party was very pleasant for a few while it lasted. From the moment the rank and file awoke to endorse the revolutionary Left Wing, with its demand for

mass action, with its insistence upon "All power to the workers," the moderates began and are using deceitful sophistry and evasiveness as their only weapons.

Here is the platform resolution that led the reactionary minority to bolt the convention:

"Socialist Party platforms, proceeding on the basis of the class struggle, and recognizing that the Socialist movement has come into the historical period of revolution, can only contain an explanation of the class struggle and the demand for all power to the workers, for a dictatorship of the proletariat.

"A municipal platform of Socialism cannot proceed on a separate basis, but must conform to the general platform, simply relating the attainment of local power to the immediate goal of gaining national power. There are no city problems within the terms of the class struggle, only one problem of capitalist vs. proletarian domination. The particular evils of national, state and city government are merely illustrative of the central problem and should be so presented; they should not be listed as the thing to be remedied, item by item, as the basis of Socialist political activity. The municipal platform of Socialism, like all other platforms can contain only one demand: all power to the workers—local power as the basis of further gains."

The above section was adopted by a vote of 389 to 83. After the vote was taken the Right Wing metamorphosed itself into a shrieking bedlam, determined to sabotage the convention. The moderates displayed their fear by refusing to oppose their real reformist policy to that of the Left which called for mass political action until "All power to the workers" becomes an established fact. The action, the bedlam, of the Right Wing "Socialists" revealed the bankruptcy of their policy as fundamentally counter-revolutionary, a policy adapted to the needs of state Capitalism versus Socialism.

The moderates were chagrined at the manner in which one revolutionary plank after another was

adopted by the convention. The rank and file of the membership knew what they wanted, and so there wasn't opportunity for the old guard to use its parliamentary trickery and bullying. Everything in the convention was done openly, in clear-cut fashion; and this only served to infuriate the old guard. The anger of the moderates found expression in childish derision of proletarian dictatorship and an approximate one hundred "appeals from the decision of the chair," for the sole purpose of delaying the business of the convention. I may add that I have seen chairmen heckled but never did I think it possible for individuals supposed to bear some prestige to be as petty in the grounds for attack as the moderates' leaders were. "Cheap" would be an appropriate, truthful adjective to apply to their antics.

The "Amnesty" convention, being promoted by non-class interests, was repudiated by the Left Wing delegates by more than two-thirds vote. It was maintained by the Left Wing that it is futile to "appeal" to a government that incarcerated the political and class war prisoners, and equally as useless to work with bourgeois organizations inherently reactionary in spirit.

But the action of the moderate "Socialists" at this convention was not surprising in the least, not more so than the performances of the moderate "Socialists" of New York and in Germany. In Chicago, the reactionary minority ran true to form in their opposition to proletarian revolution.

"All power to the workers" has a wider appeal to the needs of the proletariat than such insipid Bergersque, reactionary middle class reforms as cheaper gas, milk, car fare. The Left Wing demand, "All power to the workers" is a demand for action, now and all the time, for the proletariat to seize Power, and consciously to determine the establishment of a republic for workers.

## The Counter-revolution in the Party

Hungarian Federation, the signature on the protest, and not one other word in any other connection.

Comrade Wagenknecht pointed out that the comrades in New York have been up against a well-organized official machine for a long time, and that this situation should have been taken care of long ago. This is the sort of thing which brings about factional extremes. But we must keep the big issues in mind. The Left Wing expressions are membership expressions. They show that the party is in good health. The members should not wait for Conventions to express their opinions for them, but have the right all the time to propose changes within the party. It was these same Secretaries who came before this Committee to protest against sending delegates to the Berne Conference, which shows that they have been more accurate in their understanding of the world situation than the Committee itself. "Your hurry exposes your motives." Only the two Left Wing members of the N. E. C. voted for the Convention three months ago.

Comrade Katterfeld recalled the factional organization within the N. E. C. itself to repudiate the St. Louis platform. Four members of the Committee nearly succeeded in defeating the will of the membership, expressed by a twelve to one vote. Four members who were pro-war now constitute a majority of the minority which is taking the party into its own hands at this time. (These four are Goebel, Hogan, Holt and Kraft, the other three, Work, O'Neal and Shiplacoff, with Stedman absent at this time).

The amendment to delay the "trial" two weeks was defeated, 2 to 7. The resolution of "suspension" was passed, 7 to 2. Later, the "suspension" was given practical interpretation as expulsion by ordering the Translator-Secretaries to vacate their offices by June 10th.

\* \* \*

Wednesday morning, May 28th

A communication was read urging the Socialist Party to get together with the Labor Party, since the platforms were so much alike. This unconscious satire, however, was quite in point. Goebel showed a quick responsiveness to the idea, but no definite action was taken.

O'Neal moved to request locals not to initiate referendums until after the Convention. The vote was 5 to 4, whereupon the 2 majority members changed their votes to make it 7 to 2. There was some sentiment for a complete ban against referendums, but this was rather too strong, so the Committee went no further than this "request."

There was some heckling about the right of members of N. E. C. to see the referendum votes, which were concluded this day, May 28th. It was finally ordered that the vote should be kept secret until the

report of the Investigating Committee is received. Elected to this Committee: Arnold (Milwaukee), Brandt (St. Louis), Branstetter (Chicago),—all of the Right Wing.

\* \* \*

Thursday, May 29th.

The Organization Department was abolished. Comrade Wagenknecht has been in charge of this Department for several months, and this was the method of getting rid of him, though Wagenknecht explained that he had intended to resign at this session.

Katterfeld drily commented that he would vote for this action as consistent with the other actions of the Committee. It is absurd to retain an Organization Department after the actions already taken.

The Amnesty Convention was postponed to September 15th, after Barnes, who has been employed to organize this affair, made his report.

Stedman appeared again to state that he was informed that the Executive Committee of the South Slavic Federation was opposed to the declarations of their Translator-Secretary. This was a pretty commentary on the action of the N. E. C., but the Committee decided not to open up its action until supplied with further information.

The further business of the Thursday and Friday sessions was the issuing of proclamations and a statement of the party stand. The original draft of this statement was by Hillquit, and the statement as adopted will be taken up in a special article.

\* \* \*

The closing sessions were marked by a lack of assurance on the part of the majority, with open admissions that the confidence of the minority for a Left Wing victory in the Convention, in spite of all expulsions, was warranted.

The record of this meeting of the N. E. C. constitutes of itself a complete case for the Left Wing movement within the party and the complete assurance of the winning of the party for the Socialism of social revolution.

The party revolution is won. The counter-revolution is on. Every Socialist who is conscious of the real issues involved in this party controversy will vote for the delegates to the Emergency Convention pledged to join the American party with the Communist International.

Party expulsions can no more kill the Socialism of the social revolution than the imprisonments, deportations and brutalities of our capitalist master class. The Left Wing speaks for the Socialism which is marching along with world history, while the party officialdom is still of those who make the proletarian oppression a game of political nothingness. The Left Wing must become the party.

(Continued from page six)

several of the Federations during the past two years insisting that the recent progress was artificially stimulated. He read translations from the Lithuanian paper to instance attacks on the N. E. C. and support of the Left Wing. (These articles, by the way, as well as all the statements of the Translator-Secretaries involved, were of such clear, consistent, and aggressive character as to give the highest possible encouragement for the future of the Socialist movement in America.)

It appeared then that O'Neal and Shiplacoff had spent a good part of the night in revamping the "whereases" of the Kraft motion. Kraft promptly withdrew his motion and the more formal motion was entered by Shiplacoff. Evidently the weakening Centrists had been stiffened up in caucus. All this is highly significant because it proves of itself that the desire was to get rid of certain votes, which were too well organized for the conquest of the party for revolutionary Socialism—and the reasons for the "suspension" had to be discovered after the act.

Comrade Stilson spoke at some length for the Federations, without being presented with any definite charge except that the Federations were for the Left Wing and therefore "unconstitutional." He read the party constitution and showed clearly that there was nothing in the constitution upon which the Committee could base its power to take this action. He showed that there are many Left Wing locals still in the party, in relation to which the N. E. C. took no action, leaving the party in a condition of "chow chow." The Federations are in the Left Wing; that is true. They made slates for the party elections; they will do so again. When the N. E. C. was insistently asked for an Emergency Convention, it declared for an Amnesty Convention. There was no fight against the Left Wing until the officials realized that the party machinery was about to slip out of their hands.

Then, after all this discussion, and after all these expulsions, came the pronouncement of Shiplacoff: "The Left Wing movement doesn't exist." To which Stilson rejoined: "Then what are you talking about?" To the complaint that there was no other way out, Stilson answered: "You join the Labor Party and let the Socialist Party take care of itself."

Note, then, that as to the South Slavic Federation there was nothing before the Committee except the signature on the protest against the New York expulsions; that the Secretary made clear that the membership of this Federation had not yet acted on the Left Wing program. As to the Polish Federation, the entire case was the Translator-Secretary had affixed his name to the protest after it was completed, not having taken part in the conference between the Secretaries. There was no report of action by the Polish Federation on the Left Wing program. As to the



# First Congress of the Communist International

From the Moscow "Pravda," March 6,—Issued to the World by Radio

## The Soviet Conquers

By N. Lenin

**N**OTHING is firm in a revolution except what has been achieved by the masses of the people. It will therefore be sufficient to record in writing our real and solid conquests.

The founding of the Third (Communist) International at Moscow on March 2d, 1919, was the expression not only of the Russian proletarian masses, but of those of all nations of Russia, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Finland, Switzerland, in a word of the proletarian masses of the world.

This is precisely the reason why the founding of the Third (Communist) International is a lasting work. But four months ago it was still impossible to say that the power of Soviets, the Soviet form of the state, constituted an international achievement. There was in this form an essential element which belonged not only to Russia but to all the capitalist countries. But it was still impossible to declare in advance what changes would be made in this form by the later development of the world revolution.

The German revolution was the necessary experiment performed to answer these questions. The most advanced capitalist country presented to the entire world, following the most reactionary capitalist country, within the short space of a hundred days, not only fundamentally the same revolutionary forces, not only the same general direction of events, but even the same essential form of the new proletarian democracy: namely, the Soviets. Simultaneously, in England, in this victorious country, in this country, the richest of all in colonies, in the country which has been for the longest period the model of social harmony, or which has seemed to be such, in the most ancient home of Capitalism, we behold a wide, irresistible transformation, a powerful growth of the Soviets, and of the new Soviet forms of the conflict of the proletarian masses: the Shop Stewards committees.

In America, the most powerful capitalist country, and the youngest, there is an immense sympathy of the working masses for the Soviets.

The ice is broken. The Soviets have triumphed all over the world. They have triumphed particularly and above all in the sense that they have conquered the sympathy of the proletarian masses. That is the important part. That is a conquest which the atrocities of the imperialistic bourgeois and the persecutions and assassinations of the Bolsheviks cannot now take away from the masses. The greater the fury of the so-called democratic bourgeoisie, the more will these conquests live in the souls of the proletarian masses, in their consciousness, in their heroic readiness for the struggle.

The ice is broken. And for that reason the work of the Communist International Conference, at Moscow, which founded the Third International, proceeded with so much smoothness and regularity, so much calm and firm determination.

**R**ECENT dispatches in the capitalist press have quoted bourgeois refugees from Russia as saying that Petrograd is to a large extent deserted. Critics of the Soviet regime have eagerly accepted these reports as proof of the general ruin and decay caused by proletarian management. We have no means of learning the truth as to these stories, since so much of the "news" from Russia appearing in the daily press is not news at all but mere anti-Bolshevik propaganda.

But if it is true even to a partial extent that its inhabitants have begun to leave Petrograd, it is a healthy sign.

The obese cities of modern times are mere creations of Capitalism. They will have no reason for existence under working class rule and will, as soon as a universal revolution has been accomplished, rapidly tend to disappear.

Modern cities are mostly mere dumping grounds of privately owned transportation systems—the railroads and steamship lines. The railroads, especially, have fostered the mushroom growth of great cities. By encouraging the heaping up of human beings and merchandise at certain centres they have made their own work easier and fattened their profits. Plump earnings accrue to the transportation systems from express hauls—there is less money for them in scattered traffic and frequent stops.

We have recorded the conquests already made. We have put on paper what was already established in the consciousness of the masses. All of us knew much more than this. All of us saw and felt, by the experience of his own country, that a new proletarian movement had begun to ferment with a force and with a depth that were unheard of; that this movement would never fit into any of the old channels; that it cannot be restrained either by the "Socialism" of petty politics or by the Lloyd Georges and Wilsons of the so-called Democratic Capitalism of England and America, with all their experience and all their cleverness, nor by the Hendersons, the Renaudels, the Brantings, and other empty heroes of social-Chauvinism with all their skill in reconciling opposites.

This new movement is heading directly for a "dictatorship of the proletariat." It is advancing in spite of all hesitations, in spite of discouraging set-backs, in spite of this "Russian" chaos which is so prominent in the eyes of those who judge from the outside; it is marching toward the Soviet power with a might which is carrying along on its path millions and tens of millions of proletarians.

This is the record of our accomplishments. In our orders of the day, our reports, our papers, and our speeches, we have printed the accomplishments already made.

The Marxist theory, illuminated by the bright light of reason and experience, reaching all over the world in revolutionary workers, has assisted in grasping the full logic of events. It will aid all proletarians in the entire world who are struggling to overthrow capitalist slavery, to become clearly conscious of the object of their struggle, to march more steadily on the road already begun, to grasp more surely and consolidate their achievement. The founding of the Third International is the gateway of the International Soviet Republic, of the International victory of Communism.

## II

### A Great Epoch

By Leon Trotsky

**I** SUPPOSE the czars and the former priests who controlled the Moscow Kremlin, never imagined that there would gather within its venerable walls representatives of the most revolutionary party of the modern world. Yet this has happened. In one of the halls of the palace of justice, still haunted by the melancholy shades of the ancient Czarist penal code, are sitting the delegates of the Third International.

In truth, the tooth of war has done effective work in undermining the walls of the Kremlin.

This physical background for the Communist Congress is simply the external manifestation of the numerous changes that have taken place in the ten or twenty years just passed, in the conditions of the whole world.

In the days of the Second International, as well as of the First, Czarist Russia was the principal support of world reaction. In the international Socialist con-

gresses, the Russian revolution was represented by emigrants whom the majority of the opportunist leaders of the European Socialists regarded with an ironical condescension. The functionaries of parliamentarism were imbued with an unalterable conviction that the misfortunes of the revolution were the lot of Asiatic Russia, while Europe might rely on a gradual, peaceful and painless development from Capitalism to Socialism.

In August 1914 the internal contradictions that had been heaped up by Imperialism broke through the pacific crust of Capitalism, with its parliamentarism, legal liberties, and its political and other propositions sanctified by law. From the pinnacle of civilization, humanity was cast down into a terrible abyss of barbarism and bloody savagery.

Although the Marxist theory had foreseen the bloody catastrophe, the reformist Socialist parties were taken unawares. The prospect of peaceful development vanished in thin air. The opportunists could see no other duty than to invite the working masses to defend their nationalistic bourgeois fatherland. On August 4, 1914, the Second International perished ingloriously. Since that day, all true revolutionists, the heirs of Marxist spirit, have had no other aim than to create a new international for the implacable revolutionary struggle against capitalist society. The war unleashed by Imperialism has thrown the entire capitalist world out of its equilibrium. All questions have been revealed as revolutionary questions. The old masters of social-patriotism have displayed all their talent in the effort to preserve the appearance of their former parties, their former lies, and their old organizations. But it was no use. Once more in history, war was the mother of revolution. The imperialist war was the mother of a proletarian revolution.

The honor of initiating a proletarian revolution belongs to the Russian working class and to its Communist Party, hardened as it has been in conflict. By its November revolution, the Russian proletariat not only opened the gates of the Kremlin to the representatives of the International proletariat, but it also laid the cornerstone of the edifice of the Third International.

The revolutions of Germany, Austria, Hungary, the lightning spread of the Soviet movement and of civil war, marked by the martyrdom of Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, and of how many nameless thousands of nameless heroes, showed that Europe did not have at its disposal any other methods than those of Russia. The essential identity of the methods in the struggle for Socialism, which has been proved by experience, has permitted the creation of the Communist International and simultaneously rendered immediately necessary the convoking of the Communist Congress.

This Congress is in session within the walls of the Kremlin. We were witnesses and participants in one of the greatest events of the world war. The working class of the whole world has captured from its enemies the most inaccessible citadel of the ancient Russia of the Czars, and from this citadel it launches all its energies for the final conflict. What a joy to fight and live in such a time!

## The Emptying of the Cities

By Phillips Russell

Other capitalistic factors also assist in the process of creating the cancerous growths known as cities. The location of great industries and governmental establishments near transportation termini inevitably draw the workers thither, and with this accumulating army of toil go the usual camp followers—tradesmen, hotel keepers, purveyors of food, drink and amusement, along with a host of lesser thieves and grafters, all hoping to snatch a living from the store of wealth that begins to be heaped up as soon as labor is applied to aggregations of machinery.

Employers encourage this gathering of job hunters because it brings to their doors masses of human working animals who can be quickly hitched to a machine when times are good and who can be as quickly discharged when prosperity declines.

This accumulation of organisms, each with appetites that must be fed soon gives rise to terrific competition for the means of livelihood. The stronger, the healthier and more docile get all the jobs that require regular hours and daily attendance. The weak, the unfortunate, the depraved and the more cunning, being crowded

out of or made unacceptable to industry, are forced to rely on such means as they can muster, in order to live. Finally we have the invariable accompaniments of all great cities—crime, theft, prostitution, unemployment, degeneracy and murder.

The establishment of a regime under which things are done for service and use and not for profit, will immediately tend to draw off this mass of corruption.

The jealous monopolies of transportation being removed, new avenues of travel by rail, motor, trolley and airplane will be opened; and those persons hitherto herded in shamefully crowded buildings will be able to spread out into the country and suburbs where they may obtain access to the soil, maintain plenty of elbow room and raise their children in the sunshine.

This is not to say that cities have no sound reason for existence. They have, and it is founded deep in the human instinct for gregariousness and the craving for fellowship. There will always be cities as long as there are persons who like to live in them. There are certain kinds of human beings who will never live elsewhere if they can avoid it. There are perhaps more kinds of human beings who live in cities only because they must. As soon as artificial restrictions and compulsions are removed, they go running back to the mother of us all—the earth.